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GRADE		
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1	1	20
AGR	COM	FRB
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ARMY	CIA	NAVY
3	20	5
OSD	USIA	NSA
34		3
NSC		
6		

AIRGRAM

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

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NO.

HANDLING INDICATOR

TO : Department of State
 INFO : USCINCSO FOR POLAD, Amembassies MANAGUA, SAN JOSE, SAN SALVADOR, TEGUCIGALPA, DOM 1968

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
 BUREAU OF
 INTER-AMERICAN AFFAIRS

FROM : Amembassy GUATEMALA

DATE: April 28, 1968
 APR 28 1968

SUBJECT : Internal Security Report: April 5-18, 1968

REF : REVIEWED BY *CO* DATE *7 OCT 1981*
 PORTIONS DENIED AS INDICATED

1. With the exception of the April 18 murder of MANO chieftain Raúl Lorenzana, at the hand of unknown killers, the country has basked in a period of almost startling tranquility since the March 28 surprise military command changes.

The level of apparently politically inspired violence is down markedly from previous levels and on April 17 a leading daily was able to headline that the country was in a Clima de Tranquilidad. The next day the one month old State of Siege was reduced to a State of Alert.

2. Whether soundly-based or not, the prevailing atmosphere is one of relief and return to normalcy, an atmosphere that the President attempted to encourage by his April 5 nationwide radio and TV address. He called the command changes the routine functioning of a democratic government and promised there would be some more personnel shifts in the normal course of events. (There have been several additional changes since the speech. Two important ones from an internal security standpoint were the replacement of top officials in the Fourth Corps of the National Police, apparently restoring this unit to normal police functions instead of its previously almost exclusive counter-terror operations. Col Noé Heberando Delgado Villegas was replaced by Lt. Col. Damián de Jesus Morales Gomez and Major Jose Roberto Ramos Morales by Major Silvestre Balderas Cabrera.)

3. In another public relations move, this one largely aimed at the Army,

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Guatemala A-382

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the President and the new Minister of Defense on April 9th toured the military installations at Zacapa and Jutiapa where they were reportedly received warmly with well publicized statements of support for the Méndez government.

4. The key question is how long can the peace last. The top insurgent leaders are still around and there is no evidence that they are about to give up the fight. It is more probable that they are profiting from the let-up of pressure on the part of the security forces to regroup and consolidate their positions. [REDACTED] When and if they do take the offensive again, however, it is almost axiomatic that the security forces will be goaded back into action and the current tranquility may simply prove to have been the lull before the storm. B/
EC

5. Even the past two quiet weeks have witnessed some other apparently political violence in addition to the Lorenzana killing. Worthy of mention was a gunfight April 8 between security forces and presumed insurgents in the Department of Jalapa in which 3 of the latter were killed and an unknown number on both sides were wounded, a robbery at a swimming club on the Pacific road which may have had political overtones, a sabotage attempt against high tension wires servicing the capital, and the discovery of 2 more assassinated bodies (a new low).

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